



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 27 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
27 APRIL 1968

1. Korea

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By and large, the posture of North Korea's armed forces remains normal. Much of the latest war talk probably stems from the period of the Pueblo's capture when the North Koreans themselves were not sure what was coming next.

Pyongyang propaganda continues to whip up anti-American sentiment, nevertheless. A good deal of this is for domestic consumption, but there also are efforts to impress the outside world with North Korea's resolve. One instance was the announcement on Thursday that the North Korean defense budget will be increased by one-third. Limited information on the North Korean economy makes it difficult to say just what impact--if any--this might have on defense capability.

As we have noted, Pyongyang probably does plan to step up small raids south of the Demilitarized Zone. Early this morning the North Koreans ambushed an American patrol just south of the DMZ. One soldier was killed and three wounded.

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2. Soviet Union

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3. Jordan

Husayn's latest swing through the Arab states was financially profitable, but not much was accomplished politically.

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Husayn failed, however, to get agreement on holding an Arab summit and has finally given up the idea.

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4. Cyprus

UN Undersecretary Rolz-Bonnett visits Cyprus this weekend in hopes of breaking the deadlock over where Greek and Turkish Cypriots should meet to talk about bettering their relations. Makarios insists the talks be held on the island; Turkish Cypriot Vice President Kucuk wants them held abroad.

5. Poland

The party's anti-Semitic campaign is stirring fear of persecution among Poland's Jews, and many are leaving the country. The Dutch Embassy, which handles Israel's interests in Poland, is processing about 100 exit applications a month. Other Western embassies, including the US, also are noting an increase in applicants. Gomulka has offered publicly to let Jews leave on the understanding that they will not be allowed to return.

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6. Berlin

Yesterday the East Germans refused to let West Berlin's Mayor Schuetz travel by road through their territory. This is an escalation of Communist harassment, but there is no indication that the Russians want a major crisis now.

The East Germans are trying their "salami tactics" again in an effort gradually to restrict West German ties with Berlin. For their part, the Soviets probably will go along until it looks like real trouble is in the offing.

7. Cuba

Castro is trying hard to pump new life into his domestic revolution. In four major speeches over the past five weeks, he has shown himself preoccupied with the lack of response to his calls for greater sacrifice and productivity. Among the things Fidel has ordained in his effort to get things moving is a bigger role for the armed forces in the Cuban economy. The military will now organize and control agricultural brigades.

All this is going to create even more discontent, but, so long as the army remains loyal to Castro, discontent is not likely to be translated into action.

8. Soviet Union

During the first quarter of 1968, industrial output for civilian purposes has not matched the growth pattern for the same quarter set over the past three years. Reading between the lines of Soviet statistics, it appears the production of military hardware has gone up slightly.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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The Chinese On Negotiations: There are signs that Peking is accommodating itself to North Vietnam's acceptance of negotiations and is preparing a position on a Vietnam settlement.

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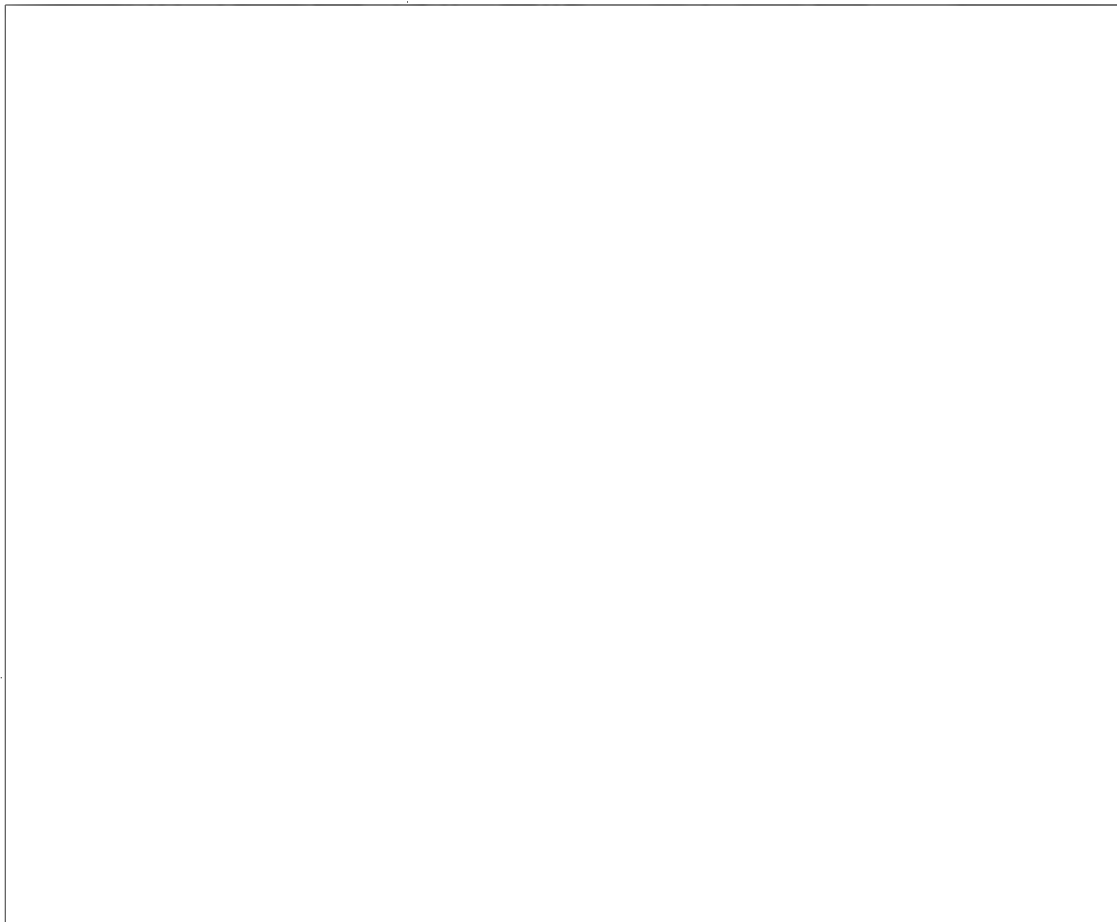
[redacted] high Chinese officials have consistently opposed a negotiated end to the Vietnam war, but at the same time have indicated that the decision to enter into negotiations would be up to Hanoi.

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In its propaganda treatment of Vietnam, Peking has maintained its hard line on negotiations, branding them as "frauds" engineered by the US and "Soviet revisionists." The Chinese, however, have maintained considerable flexibility on the subject by refusing to criticize publicly or comment on Hanoi's stated willingness to begin preliminary negotiations.

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Hanoi Keeping an "Indications" Book: Hanoi has published a catalog of "war crimes" committed by the US since the limitation of the bombing. The North

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Vietnamese "War Crimes Commission" published the list yesterday claiming that the US had significantly increased the pace of the bombing in the four southern provinces of North Vietnam as a military response to the "general offensive and general uprising" of the South Vietnamese people.

A running account of the number of air attacks on populated areas was given for each of the four provinces, and each example was illustrated by lists of schools, hospitals, and churches destroyed, as well as civilians killed. The list included two claims of bombing north of the 20th parallel.

The War Crimes Commission is also keeping a book on the level of artillery fire across the DMZ into the Vinh Linh Zone. In the first two weeks of April, said the statement, firing was twice the monthly average for March. All of it was directed at vegetable gardens and civilian homes, according to the commission. The communiqué also protested continued offshore bombardment of the southern provinces and reconnaissance overflights throughout the country.

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More on the New Communist "Alliance" in the South: The Communists are continuing to pump up their new national alliance. On 25 April, Liberation Radio broadcast a "statement" of objectives which expanded on the "communiqué" of the day before. It outlined in greater detail the domestic and foreign policy goals of the alliance, which look more and more like those of the Liberation Front every day.

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One of the alliance's domestic policies is to establish "contact" with the Liberation Front and to cooperate with it. The Front is described as a "great patriotic force" which cannot be excluded from the settlement of all the problems of South Vietnam. The alliance also offers to discuss an end to the war with the US.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi Radio Cites US Critics: Hanoi radio on 24 April highlighted statements from prominent congressional leaders critical of the administration's

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attitude toward the selection of a site for preliminary contacts with North Vietnam. The radio commentary cited Senator Kennedy's speeches in Los Angeles and Oregon, criticizing the President for not going "anywhere any time," Senator Mansfield's 18 April statement on US troop withdrawal, and Senator McCarthy's criticism of Secretary Rusk on 21 April.

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